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The two vocal pieces of the November number of *Hanover Square* consist of a graceful little song by Mr. Arthur Sullivan, "What does little birdie say?" and a ballad by Mr. H. Smart, "Bessie Bell," which, simple and unpretending as it is, bears that unmistakable stamp of the hand of the highly-cultivated musician which is impressed on all Mr. Smart's productions, great and small. The December number of *Hanover Square* well sustains the character established by the first issue. The opening piece, a notturno by M. Silas, is a graceful pianoforte solo, in the style of those exquisite pieces of which Chopin has furnished many inimitable examples. There are both development and variety in this notturno by M. Silas, which may compare with many other elegant pianoforte pieces by the same composer. Following this, is an expressive song by Miss V. Gabriel, "Change upon change," to Mrs. Browning's words. The sustained cantabile of the vocal melody is well contrasted with the rippling movement of the pianoforte accompaniment. "The Gipsies' Revel," by M. Kuhe, is a light pianoforte piece, in dance style, standing in bright contrast to the more serious tone of M. Silas's notturno. An agreeable, if not very original song, "Though Age be like December," by that multitudinous composer of successful ballads, Mr. Balfé, concludes the December number of *Hanover Square*; as a pendant to which, an extra Christmas number has been issued, exclusively devoted to dance music—consisting of two waltzes, a mazurka, a quadrille, and a galop—all sufficiently well adapted to their festive purpose, but as exempt from serious criticism as the trifle on the ball-room suppers-table.

*Les Soirées Musicales. Duet for two performers on the Pianoforte.* By LINDSAY SLOPER. (Lamborn Cock, Addison and Co.), is a brilliant fantasia on Rossini's vocal duet and solo, "Li Mariuari" and "Tarantella," which subjects are here surrounded with some very graceful embellishments and florid passages for both performers; altogether forming a brilliant and effective pianoforte duet, especially suited for drawing-room performance.

"A Glimpse of Blue Sky," song, by Henry Smart, and "While the wood grows," song, by Jules Benedict (both published by Messrs. Lamborn Cock, Addison and Co.), are two graceful productions by composers whose slightest pieces are stamped with the impress of matured thought and constructive skill. Mr. Smart's song is such as none but a musician of high attainments could produce; the vocal melody is full of refined expression, while the accompaniment, although far from elaborate, has that special fitness of character and artistic neatness so seldom met with in this form of composition.

Mr. Benedict's song also shows the hand of the master, simple as is the vocal strain—while, as in the case of Mr. Smart's song, there is a completeness in the general treatment that marks the hand of the cultivated artist.

*Day Dreams. Six Pieces for the Pianoforte.* By ARTHUR S. SULLIVAN. (Boosey and Co.)

THESE pieces, short as they are, will tend to enhance their composer's growing reputation. They are all characterised by graceful elegance of style; and that peculiar neatness and finish of construction which are only attainable by a thorough cultivation of the art of composition. There is no power more rare than that of producing trifles impressed with special value and marked character: and of this power Mr. Sullivan seems to possess a considerable share. Of the six pieces here presented, No. 2, an *Allegretto grazioso*; No. 5, *Tempo di Valse*; and No. 6, *A l'Hongroise*, are the most important in length and development. These, as well as the smaller numbers of the collection, will not only be valuable to young pianoforte students, but will also interest children of a larger growth.

## Correspondence.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MUSICAL TIMES.

SIR,—I think the important question of Modern Church services, suggested by Mr. Parks, and discussed at some length by Mr. Nichols in your last impression, might be made something of. And before the idea is abandoned, and as money is omnipotent in musical as in all other matters, it would be gratifying to learn if amateurs would come forward with subscriptions (as I, for one, following Mr. Nichols' lead, shall be most happy to do,) and so set on foot a prize worth competing for.

There are some difficulties in the way. If you have many prizes, you diminish the money value of them—thereby weakening the attraction—and if you have few, you shut the door against all compositions which are not 1st, 2nd, or 3rd; and to retain which it might be very acceptable. Then, again, although it would be most desirable to secure the competition of such men as Mr. Nichols names, not one would be likely to vote for his own composition.

On the whole, however, I do not see where your correspondent's plan can be improved upon; save that I think a committee of, say six, might be formed to set the thing going. Some one must take the initiative. The committee formed, the prospectus might be issued, and then the plan proceeded with in detail at their discretion.

I hope the opportunity will not be lost on my brother amateurs; and repeating my humble promise of support,

I am, your obedient servant,

J. W. P.

TO MESSRS. NOVELLO, EWER & CO.

GENTLEMEN.—It is a cheering sign of the *Musical Times*, in a double meaning, when such a letter as that signed "Henry Nichols, Chemist," appears in your columns. Taken in one sense, it proves plainly enough that it is the cause of music in general—not music published by Novello, Ewer & Co.—that your excellent little paper has at heart; and taken in another sense, it shows, that there are those among our people who have come to feel how pointless, how meaningless, how utterly inadequate a vehicle for our canticles, is the chant; that mongrel style of song—half say, half sing, that we only tolerate as a vehicle of the prose psalms as the least objectionable makeshift whereto to wed prose sentences of ever varying length and rhythm; those, who feel that the great hymns of our service held by our Church so important, because so comprehensive, that we cannot meet for worship, but she bids us use two or more of them—that those, *the* canticles, should have their own special and appropriate vehicle, not in our cathedrals only, but even in our smallest parish churches. Every one who rightly comprehends music's grand mission in worship, must sympathize, and join in your correspondent's desire for more services really worthy of being wedded to our canticles; and yet moreover fitted for the performance of our ordinary choirs, and within the comprehension of our general congregation. But the question is, how are we to obtain a sufficient supply of such services? Your correspondent proposes the prize system, that of offering substantial rewards in money to the composers whose pieces are adjudicated, the best in competition—an excellent system in many ways, interesting a large number of composers, in the style required, drawing the attention of the judges themselves to certain musical wants, above all, singling out and encouraging young composers of merit; the best of all systems to keep our store of part-songs, for instance, duly replenished, but hardly applicable to a setting of a canticle; and for this, as a primary reason, that those to whom we can with greatest confidence look for our desired supply, need no stimulating. Sunday by Sunday, as a rule at least, is the want thrust before them as they take their seats at their respective organs; their minds are thoroughly alive to the matter; we may have